



**ARIZONA STATE SENATE**  
*Fifty-Fifth Legislature, First Regular Session*

**AMENDED**

**FACT SHEET FOR S.B. 1400**

schools; course equivalents

Purpose

Outlines course equivalents for activities outside of courses offered by a district or charter school beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. Determines course credit and average daily membership (ADM) calculations.

Background

A school district or charter school may include concurrent coursework for ADM calculations after receiving approval from the State Board of Education (SBE) or a charter sponsor. Concurrent coursework must allow a student to earn at least three semester hours of credit for a community college or university course that is at a higher level than the course being taught in grades 9 through 12. The student must also attend at least one course offered at the school district or charter school each semester. The coursework must be applicable to an established community college academic degree or certificate program and transferrable to an Arizona public university. The school district or charter school pays the community college or university for the tuition cost of the concurrent coursework or reimburses the student for tuition cost ([A.R.S. § 15-901.07](#)).

The SBE establishes 22 credits as the minimum number of credits necessary for high school graduation. This includes: 1) four credits of English or ESL; 2) three credits of social studies; 3) four credits of mathematics; 4) three credits of science; 5) one credit in the arts or career and technical education and vocational education; 6) seven credits of additional courses prescribed by the local district board ([A.A.C. § R7-2-302](#)).

ADM is defined as the total enrollment of fractional and full-time students, minus withdrawals. Withdrawals include students who withdraw from schools and students who are absent for ten consecutive school days, except for excused absences defined by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) ([A.R.S. § 15-901](#)).

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the state General Fund associated with this legislation.

Provisions

1. Requires school districts and charter schools, beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, to allow students in grades 9 through 12 at the request of the student and with permission of the parent, to receive one elective credit per school year through any of the following:
  - a) working the equivalent of at least five hours per week over the course of a semester, including summer break;
  - b) participating in an organized sport;
  - c) participating in learning opportunities outside of the courses offered by the school district or charter school, including tutoring, STEM clubs and SBE or school-approved internships and apprenticeships;
  - d) participating in community arts, including music lessons and community theater; and
  - e) passing any courses offered by an Arizona public university, community college or any private postsecondary institution approved by the SBE.

2. Requires the SBE to prescribe qualifying sports while considering the following as organized sports:
  - a) off-campus leagues;
  - b) sports not organized by the school district or charter school, including the following:
    - i. sports leagues organized by for-profit or nonprofit organizations;
    - ii. club sports;
    - iii. any other sports league that students participate in outside of school; and
  - c) district or charter school sports in which the student participates for a season.
3. Requires that for each completed course equivalent, a student earn the equivalent of at least one currently required elective credit towards graduation requirements.
4. Deems a course equivalent is:
  - a) considered to be a subject for the purposes of calculating a fractional or full-time student; and
  - b) not required to meet 123 hours a year, or the equivalent to be considered as a subject.
5. Specifies the instructional hours provided to a student completing a course equivalent are included in ADM calculations.
6. Limits ADM to 1.0 for a full-time high school student who completes a course equivalent.
7. Requires the SBE to:
  - a) adopt a framework for schools to establish course equivalency; and
  - b) post a list of local or statewide nonprofits and vendors where students' out-of-school experiences are recognized for credit, as provided by school districts and charter schools.
8. Requires a school district governing board or charter school governing body to establish a consideration process for requests for course equivalent credit at the student's school.
9. Specifies the opportunity to identify a course equivalent will be provided to families and students during the course and semester enrollment periods.
10. Requires schools to:
  - a) recognize the experiences students have outside of required school courses as relevant to the student's growth and development; and
  - b) identify an elective for students who are working and request a course equivalent.
11. Allows the SBE to adopt rules for out-of-school experiences as prescribed to meet academic standards for students in kindergarten through grade 8.
12. Specifies that any hours spent by kindergarten through grade 8 students participating in out-of-school experiences as prescribed, according to SBE-adopted rules:
  - a) count toward the ADM instructional hour requirements; and
  - b) are included in the calculation of ADM.
13. States that any excess hours in the school day for students in kindergarten through grade 8 participating in out-of-school experiences are used for student support and acceleration on approval by the student's parents and teaching team.
14. Becomes effective on the general effective date.

Amendments Adopted by Committee

1. Specifies students can receive at least one elective credit per school year, instead of core credits.
2. Includes district or charter school sports in the list of course equivalents.
3. Requires SBE to adopt a framework for schools, instead of program rules, including a process for families to appeal a decision to not accept credits.
4. Requires a district governing board or charter governing body to establish an approval process at the student's school allowing families to designate which course they would like the out-of-school experiences to be credited for.

Amendments Adopted by Committee of the Whole

1. The Committee of the Whole substituted a floor amendment for the committee amendment.
2. Permits, upon a student's request and permission from their parent, to allow students in grades 9 through 12 to receive one elective credit per school year, instead of course credits, through course equivalents.
3. Adds school district or charter school sports to qualified sports for course equivalents.
4. Requires the SBE to adopt a framework, instead of rules, for schools to develop their course equivalency program.
5. Replaces the requirement that the SBE designate course equivalent providers with the requirement that the SBE post a list of local or statewide nonprofits and vendors, as provided by school district and charter schools.
6. Requires a school district governing board or charter school governing body to:
  - a) create a process for considering course equivalents requests at the student's school;
  - b) provide families an opportunity to identify a course equivalent during enrollment periods and make efforts to recognize outside school experiences as important to students' growth and development; and
  - c) identify an elective course for students who work and request a course equivalent.
7. Makes conforming changes.

Senate Action

ED                      2/9/21      DPA      5-3-0

Prepared by Senate Research

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JO/JS/gs